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xlix. 10. עַד כִּי יבֹא שָׁלֵחַ, ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, *until his fate shall come upon him*. May not the whole clause be a qualification added to the text at a time when the sceptre had already passed away from Judah? Mr. Fripp treats these words as an interpolation, although upon other grounds. Cf. Micah iv. 8, where, if I am not mistaken, an analogous threat of judgment has been interpreted and expanded in the sense of a Messianic promise. Compare also such passages as Isa. xlvii. 9 (*bis*), 11, Ezek. vii. 5, 6, of the "coming" of evil—*Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus*—expressions pregnant with the significance not only of disaster but of destiny.

These are, I think, the only instances of the relative װ in Genesis. The first may be explained as a corruption, the second as an interpolation.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR A SIMPLER MODE OF POINTING.

It seems not unlikely that the recently awakened interest in the critical study of the Old Testament may lead to a considerable increase in the number of Hebrew students. But even in the classical languages, which offer fewer difficulties to the beginner, and form the mainstay of our higher education, the necessity for economizing time and directing labour to the best advantage, for combining, as far as possible, simplicity of method with accuracy of result, has been felt for many years past. Such books as Abbott and Mansfield's *Primer of Greek Accidence*, or President Harper's *Elements of Hebrew*, are efforts in the same direction. That a further step might be taken with profit is sufficiently suggested by the dry remark of Professor A. R. Davidson: "Probably only those who have already solved all the other problems of the universe, and find still a little time upon their hands, think of studying the Hebrew Accents" (*Expositor*, 4th ser., VI, 320).

The text of the Hebrew Scriptures is commonly presented to the reader in one of two forms: either accompanied by such an apparatus of points and accents as bewilders the attention and fatigues the sight, or else unpointed, and affording indeed a grateful relief to the eye, but a veritable quicksand to the learner, and causing difficulty and uncertainty even to more advanced students. Would a method intermediate between these two extremes be practicable and legitimate, at least as an aid to study?

Starting from the basis of the consonantal text, I would propose:—

(1) To introduce a simple system of punctuation, by means of point and comma, founded upon the traditional accentuation, although not slavishly conforming to it.

(2) To mark the tone in every case, and the secondary tone where present, by an acute accent placed above the initial letter of the accented syllable. Where, however, the accent preceding a pause occasions vowel-change, a circumflex might be used. No other signs, except the points of װ and ױ, should be allowed above the letters, nor any other accents employed.

(3) To indicate all the vowels by subscript signs, permitting no other signs in this position. A vertical stroke, the symbol of Silluq and Metheg, no longer needed for that purpose, might serve to represent long I. Long U might be symbolized by a miniature v; long O by a miniature Omega (Ω); short O by a small circle, which could, of course, be combined with the usual sign for the half-vowel; while I would venture to abolish altogether the useless and misleading silent Shewa. In the case of initial ם, the vowel sign should be placed beneath the vowel letter; in all other cases beneath the preceding consonant. The points of ם and ם would disappear.

(4) To print the breathings נ and ן, and the semi-vowels ם and ם, *when not employed as consonants* (that is, whether used as vowels or as etymological symbols), with hollow or linear type. Mappiq would thus be rendered superfluous.

Such a scheme as the above, while retaining the grammatical and critical value of the transmitted consonantal text, would afford a complete and uniform system of phonetic signs, in which the several elements of the pronunciation, consonants, vowels, and accents, while clearly distinguished from each other, would be simultaneously presented to the eye in consecutive and parallel series. The consequent gain to the reader in facility would, I believe, be very great. Now a gain in facility means potentially a gain in accuracy. If you reduce and classify the objects which claim and divide the attention, you reduce at the same time the likelihood of oversight. Moreover, no text can be profitably studied unless to the patient examination of the details we can add the rapid and repeated survey of the whole. After all, the interest of most of us in the Bible is not purely a matter of Philology. Finally, although long practice will diminish, it does not altogether remove, the fatigue of eye and brain by a difficult and complex character. A very distinguished *savant*, long resident in England and past master of our language, is said to have found, upon revisiting the Continent, that he could lecture for an hour and a half in his native tongue without more fatigue than was caused by an hour's lecturing in English.

So even the accustomed exertion tells, and no scholar can afford to neglect the economy of eyesight. Why should not Hebrew be made as legible as Greek?

GREY HUBERT SKIPWITH.

### SPANISH JEWISH HISTORY.

DR. KAYSERLING has done me a certain amount of injustice in his criticism of my book on the Jews in Spain by neglecting to observe the conditions under which my entries have been printed. The following passage from the prefatory letter to my list of documents, for it claims to be nothing more, will explain what I mean.

“Nor could I check or control in any way the entries of the archivists, which I have left in exactly the same form as regards spelling and punctuation as that in which I found them. This will account for the various ways in which proper names are spelt; these I have left as I found them, merely collecting together the various forms in the indexes at the end. To have attempted to check them by the documents at the time would have reduced my spoil to one-tenth of its present extent, to have checked them by correspondence afterwards was beyond my power.”

Again, in the introductory note to the *Index Nominum*, p. 250, I have further pointed out the necessity of inserting necessarily uncertain orthography of the proper names contained in my lists.

“The actual forms of the names in this list must be used with caution, since they are no less than four stages off the originals, being printed versions of my transcripts of the archivists’ abstracts of the official copies in the Registros of the original documents, which were probably not distinguished by any rigid orthography of proper names.”

Everybody who has to do with mediaeval documents, especially those relating to Jews, must be familiar with the terrible hash that the Christian scribes made with the unfamiliar Jewish names. I have made some of the same obvious corrections in the *Index Nominum*, and some of these Dr. Kayserling has repeated after me. But his unrivalled knowledge of Spanish Jewish history has enabled him to add considerably to these emendations which have made his criticism so valuable, but in justice to myself I would venture to emphasize the fact that in the majority of instances he is correcting the scribes and not my transcripts of their entries. Though on the other hand